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Committee Assignments
Land Use & Planning (Chair)
Highways & Transportation
Higher Education

Senate Bills to Watch

SB 5308 – Limits a Growth Management Hearings Board's actions to a review of whether or not the local governments followed legal procedures. *(The bill passed the Senate and is now in the House Local Government Committee.)*

SB 5775 – Establishes a new tax on RVs. *(This bill passed the Senate Parks, Fish & Wildlife Committee and is still in Ways and Means. Sen. Mulliken is opposed to this tax and will fight against it.)*

SB 5108 – Removing statutory authority for access to private property. *(This bill passed the Land Use & Planning Committee and is now in Ways & Means)*

SB 5409 – Providing for direct petition annexation. *(Passed the Senate and is now in the House Local Government Committee.)*

SB 5295 – Places a \$15 fee on studded snow tires. *(Passed the Senate Transportation Committee and is now in the Senate Rules Committee.)*

Sen. Joyce Mulliken's

UPDATE FROM OLYMPIA

3/7/03

Dear Friends,

We are just about halfway through the 2003 Session. The next couple of weeks will consist of a flurry of action on the Senate floor as we pass bills over to the House.

In my past updates to you, I mentioned two bills that passed the Senate yesterday (Thursday, March 6). I am very pleased the Senate took quick action on these bills. They are:

Senate Bill 5409 – creates a “double-majority” petition method where both a majority of voters *and* property owners would have to approve future annexations. This bill passed the Senate unanimously. This legislation brings clarity and fairness to the direct petition method of annexation, and saves costs of an unnecessary election

Senate Bill 5308 – This legislation limits a Growth Management Hearings Board's actions to a review of whether or not the local governments followed the legal procedure to adopt their comprehensive plans. Too many times, these hearings boards make decisions based on ambiguous definitions. Currently, they have the ability to ‘invalidate’ a local comprehensive plan the cities, counties and citizens have adopted after – and oftentimes contentious – compromises are reached. This has become the ‘lawyer employment security act’ because of the expensive appeals. The lawyer wins, the taxpayers lose.

What's further complicating the problem and causing more frustration is the fact that board members are appointed by the governor and have been given quasi-judicial authority, with no accountability to the voters. If I mess up, believe me, I hear about it from my constituents. I am accountable to the people who elect me.

I am also working hard to prevent a “\$15-per-tire” fee from being levied on studded snow tires – \$30 to \$60 for a two- or four-wheel drive! **Senate Bill 5295** already passed the Senate Transportation Committee where I serve as the only Eastern Washington senator on the committee. It is now in the Senate Rules Committee.

This is a safety issue as well as a fiscal issue. Many of us who live East of the Cascades depend on studded tires for several months out of the year. I will continue to fight this bill in the Senate Rules Committee and, if necessary, in the House of Representatives.

As always, please contact my office with your questions or concerns. It is always a pleasure to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Sen. Joyce Mulliken, 13th Legislative District